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SOLAR/1034-79/05

## Monthly Performance Report



ALPHA CONSTRUCTION CO.
MAY 1979

## **U.S.** Department of Energy

National Solar Heating and Cooling Demonstration Program

National Solar Data Program



## \_NOTICE \_

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## MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT ALPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

MAY 1979

## I. SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The Alpha Construction Company site is a single-family residence in Canton, Ohio. Solar energy is used for space heating the home and preheating domestic hot water (DHW). The solar energy system has an array of flat-plate collectors with a gross area of 428 square feet. The array faces south at an angle of 37 degrees to the horizontal. Air is the transfer medium that delivers solar energy from the collector array to storage and to the space heating and hot water loads. Solar energy is stored in the basement in a 510-cubic-foot bin containing 50,100 pounds of rock. The bin has concrete block walls and polyurethane insulation. Preheated city water is stored in an 80-gallon preheat storage tank and supplied, on demand, to a conventional 52-gallon DHW tank. When solar energy is insufficient to satisfy the space heating load, a heat pump in the air-handling unit provides auxiliary energy for space heating. Similarly, an electrical heating element in the DHW tank provides auxiliary energy for water heating. The system, shown schematically in Figure 1, has four modes of solar operation.

<u>Mode 1 - Collector-to-Space Heating</u>: This mode activates when the collector is operating, a space heating demand exists, and the plenum temperature at the top of storage is above the minimum value suitable for supplying heat to the house. Collection begins when the temperature at the top of the collector is higher by a minimum amount than the temperature in the plenum at the bottom of storage. Heated air is passed through the plenum at the top of storage and circulated through the house by the heat pump air-handling unit before being returned to the collector.

<u>Mode 2 - Collector-to-Storage</u>: This mode activates when the collector is operating and there is either no demand for space heating or the plenum

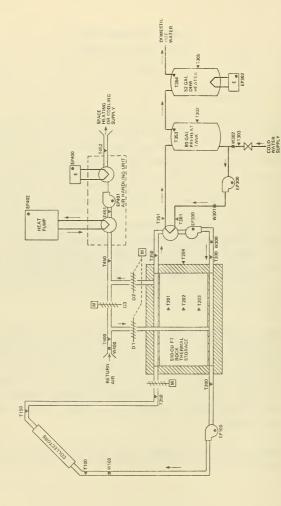


Figure 1. ALPHA CONSTRUCTION CO. SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM SCHEMATIC

1001 COLLECTOR PLANE TOTAL INSOLATION
 1001 OUTDOOR TEMPERATURE
 1500 INDOOR TEMPERATURE

temperature at the top of storage is below the minimum value for supplying heat to the house.

<u>Mode 3 - Storage-to-Space Heating</u>: This mode activates when there is a demand for space heating, and the plenum temperature at the top of storage is above the minimum value for supplying heat to the house. The fan in the air-handling unit draws air from the bin, circulating it through the house and back to storage.

<u>Mode 4 - Domestic Water Preheating</u>: This mode activates when the collector is operating and when the temperature at the top of the collector indicates a minimum value for hot water heating, which must be above the plenum temperature at the bottom of storage.

## II. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

## INTRODUCTION

The site was unoccupied in May and the solar energy system operated continuously during the month. Total solar energy collected was 4.2 million Btu and the total solar energy used was 0.43 million Btu or 10 percent of the collected energy. The change in stored energy was 0.069 million Btu and the total system losses amounted to 3.7 million Btu. Solar energy satisfied 88 percent of the space heating requirements. There was no demand for hot water during the month. The solar energy system incurred an electrical energy expense of 0.55 million Btu.

### WEATHER CONDITIONS

During the month, total incident solar energy on the collector array was 19.0 million Btu for a daily average of 1432 Btu per square foot. This was

below the estimated average daily solar radiation for this geographical area during May of 1533 Btu per square foot for a south-facing plane with a tilt of 37 degrees to the horizontal. The average ambient temperature during May was 58°F as compared with the long-term average for May of 59°F. The number of heating degree-days for the month (based on a 65°F reference) was 274, as compared with the long-term average of 231. The number of cooling degree-days was 43, as compared with the average of 36.

## THERMAL PERFORMANCE

<u>System</u> - During May the solar energy system performed somewhat poorer than expected. The expected performance was determined from a modified f-chart analysis using measured weather and subsystem loads as input. Solar energy used by the system was estimated by assuming that all energy collected would be applied to the load. Actual solar energy used was 0.43 million Btu versus an estimated 0.7 million Btu. System total solar fraction was 88 percent versus an estimated 100 percent.

<u>Collector</u> - The total incident solar radiation on the collector array for the month of May was 19.0 million Btu. During the period the collector loop was operating, the total insolation amounted to 17.2 million Btu. The total collected solar energy for the month of May was 4.2 million Btu, resulting in a collector array efficiency of 22 percent, based on total incident insolation. Solar energy delivered from the collector array to storage was 3.8 million Btu, while solar energy delivered from the collector array directly to the loads amounted to 0.18 million Btu. Energy loss during transfer from the collector array to storage and loads was 0.24 million Btu. This loss represented 6 percent of the energy collected. Operating energy required by the collector loop was 0.37 million Btu.

 $\frac{\text{Storage}}{0.25 \text{ million Btu}} - \text{Solar energy delivered to storage was } 3.8 \text{ million Btu}. \quad \text{There were} \\ 0.25 \text{ million Btu} \text{ delivered from storage to the space heating subsystem.} \quad \text{Energy}$ 

loss from storage was 3.5 million Btu. This loss represented 92 percent of the energy delivered to storage. The storage efficiency was 8 percent: This is calculated as the ratio of the sum of the energy removed from storage and the change in stored energy, to the energy delivered to storage. The average storage temperature for the month was  $113^{\circ}F$ .

<u>DHW Load</u> - Because the home was unoccupied in May, there was no demand for hot water. A total of 0.18 million Btu of solar energy was used to heat the water in the preheat tank. The DHW subsystem consumed a total of 0.27 million Btu of operating energy, resulting in an electrical energy expense of 0.27 million Btu. An additional 0.26 million Btu of auxiliary electrical energy were used by the hot water tank to maintain the temperature. The average temperature of the water in the DHW tank was 119°F.

<u>Space Heating Load</u> - The measured space heating load for the unoccupied home during May was 0.29 million Btu. The solar energy system provided 0.25 million Btu. The remaining load of 0.035 million Btu was satisfied by an auxiliary electrical heat pump and an electrical heating element at an electrical energy consumption of 0.011 million Btu. The space heating subsystem consumed an additional 0.036 million Btu of operating energy. A net electrical energy savings of 0.096 million Btu were obtained from the solar portion of the space heating subsystem.

### OBSERVATIONS

The solar energy site was unoccupied during May and presented a minimum space heating load due to a low thermostat setting of 62°F and relatively mild ambient temperature. More solar energy than required was collected to satisfy the space heating load. The uncontrolled energy escape from storage of 3.5 million Btu into the conditioned space and the outside environment caused electrical energy to be expended for 12 percent of the space heating load by the auxiliary heat pump.

During the month, the collector air-flow sensor (W100) continued to read lower values of air flow than previously measured. The cause for this reduced air flow remains undetermined; however, a faulty sensor is suspected. Therefore, collected energy for the month may be slightly higher than stated in the attached report. The losses from storage would be increased by the same amount, since the measured energy delivered to the load is not affected.

The DHW preheat loop expended more operating energy than the amount of solar energy transferred to the DHW preheat tank. The configuration of the DHW preheat loop permits solar energy transfer to the preheat tank only when collection is occurring. A separate air blower is required by this subsystem and adds significantly to operating costs. Frequently the heated air from the collector at the beginning or end of the collection period is cooler than the temperature of the water in the preheat tank. The operation of the preheat loop, which is independent of the water temperature in the tank, extracts energy from the tank during these periods. During periods of heating from storage, an induced air flow occurs through the DHW loop. A portion of the unmeasurable energy loss from storage may escape through this air path. During the cooling season the storage subsystem must be operated in order to operate the DHW preheat loop and energy that is not used by the DHW subsystem is collected in storage. However, the energy losses from storage transfer into the conditioned space and add to the space cooling loads. These energy losses reduce the energy savings obtained by the DHW subsystem.

## ENERGY SAVINGS

The solar energy system incurred a total electrical energy expense of 0.55 million Btu. The space heating subsystem provided an electrical energy savings of 0.096 million Btu, but this was eliminated due to the expense of operating the DHW subsystem (0.27 million Btu) and the collection subsystem (0.37 million Btu).

## III. ACTION STATUS

Boeing conducted a preliminary air-mapping survey in October which revealed significant leaks in the energy collection and storage subsystems. Sealing the accessible leaks would only provide minimal improvement.

Boeing has been advised of the reduced air-flow measurements of W100. A schedule for corrective action has not been established.

# SOLAR REATING AND COCLING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## MONTHLY REPORT SITE SUMMARY

SITE: AUPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY REPORT PERIOD: MAY,1979

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SYSTEM PERFORMANCE FACTOR:

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USER'S GUIDE TO THE MCNTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SCLAR DATA FEGGRAM\*FERRUARY 28\*1978\* SCLARYOO0A-7817A REFERENCE:

## DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM SOLAR FEATING AND CCCLING

## MONTHLY REPORT SITE SUMMARY

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THE SCLAR ENERSY SYSTEM PROVIDES ENERGY TO A
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GALCIN HOT WATER PREFEAT TANK. STERAGE IS 510 CUBIC FEET OF
A HEAT POUP AND ELECTRIC STRIP FEATERS PROVIDE AUXILIARY
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# SOLAR PEATING AND COOLING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## MONTHLY REPORT ENERGY COLLECTION AND STORAGE SUBSYSTEW (ECSS)

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SITE: ALPHA CCNSTRUCTION COMPANY REPORT PERIOD: MAY, 1979

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# SOLAR HEATING AND CCOLING DEMENSTRATION PROGRAM

## MONTHLY REPORT COLLECTOR ARRAY PERFORMANCE

SITE: ALPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

SOLAR/1034-79/05

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\* DENOTES UNAVAILABLE CATA. © DENOTES NULL CATA. N.A. DENOTES NOT APPLICABLE DATA.

# SOLAR HEATING AND COOLING DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

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SITE: ALPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

SOLAR / 1034-79/05

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<sup>\*</sup> DENOTES UNAVAILABLE DATA. a DENOTES NULL CATA. N.A. DENOTES NOT APPLICABLE DATA.

# SOLAR HEATING AND CCCLING DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

MONTHLY REPORT HOT WATER SUBSYSTEM SOL AR/1034-79/05

SITE: ALPFA CGNSTRUCTION COMPANY REPORT PERIOD: MAY,1979

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# SCLAR FEATING AND COOLING CEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

## MONTHLY REPORT SPACE HEATING SUBSYSTEM

SDL AR / 1 034-79/05

SITE: ALPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY REPORT PERIOD: MAY,1979

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# SOLAR HEATING AND COOLING DEMCNSTRATION PROGRAM

## MONTHLY REPORT ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

SOLAR/1034-79/05

SITE: ALPHA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY REPORT PERIOD: MAY, 1979

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<sup>\*</sup> DENOTES UNAVAILABLE CATA. 3 DENCTES NULL DATA. N.A. DENCTES NOT APPLICABLE DATA.

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